USDA

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N F C   B U L L E T I N

Title: I, Payroll/Personnel Manual

Chapter:

Bulletin: Title I-06-6, Changes to the Payroll/Personnel System, Front-End System Interface (FESI), FOCUS Reporting System (FOCUS), and Information/Research Inquiry System (IRIS)

Date: May 2, 2006

To: Holders of Payroll/Personnel Manual
Agency Personnel Offices

In the past, race and ethnicity information was collected from one question on Standard Form (SF)-181, Ethnicity and Race Identification (ERI), asking the employee to select the single race/ethnicity category with which he or she most closely identified. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has **recently** modified the method by which ethnicity and race identification information is reported for accession actions.

The revised SF-181 will be used to process accession actions effective January 1, 2006, or later. For accession actions occurring prior to January 1, 2006, the Race or National Origin (RNO) data standard (single alpha category designation) will continue to be reported until this data is superseded by a new ERI designation.

Modified Methods for Capturing Ethnicity and Race Identification Information

The new two-question format for ERI information on the SF-181 requires that the employee indicate (1) whether or not they are of Latino/Hispanic ethnicity and (2) which of the five given race categories applies to them. **Please note** that the second question is asked regardless of the response to the first question. For more information on the SF-181, see *http://www.opm.gov/forms*.

The revised question format on the SF-181 has led to a new coding sequence for reporting this information to OPM. The most significant changes are:

■ A sequence of six "**1**"s and "**0**"s ("**1**" denoting "**true**", and "**0**" denoting "**false**"), which reflects question answers and category designations for individual employees.

■ The creation of separate categories for "*Asian*" and "*Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander*".

■ The requirement that agencies allow employees to identify with any combination of races listed on the SF-181. The only limitation is that a designation of "**none**" is not allowed. Per previous OPM guidance, employee refusal to self designate will necessitate agency designation on their behalf.

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For more information on ERI, refer to the *Guide to Personnel Data Standards*, located at *http://www.opm.gov/feddata/guidance.asp*.

Effective Pay Period 09 (May 8, 2006), the National Finance Center (NFC) will begin capturing an employee's ERI for race or national origin, as required by OPM. The Payroll/Personnel System will be updated to accept/display the ERI data in the following applications:

- Master File Change Document (30 Document) in Entry, Processing, Inquiry and Correction System (EPIC)
- Front-End System Interface (FESI)
- FOCUS Reporting System (FOCUS)
- Information/Research Inquiry System (IRIS)

Criteria for Processing ERI Data Using the 30 Document

The criteria for processing ERI data using the 30 Document in EPIC is as follows:

- The data element entitled ERI-Code, is comprised of 6 individual positions.
- Each position must be equivalent to either *0, false*, or *1, true*, to indicate an employee's designation in each of the 6 categories.
- The ERI data cannot be all zeros (*000000*), but it can be all ones (*111111*).

Criteria for Processing ERI Data Using FESI

The criteria for processing ERI data using FESI is as follows:

- The data element entitled ERI-Code, is a 6 position-numeric field.
- The field number is *D00077*.
- Each position must be equivalent to either *0, false*, or *1, true*, to indicate an employee's designation in each of the 6 categories.
- The ERI data cannot be all zeros (*000000*), but it can be all ones (*111111*).

Criteria for Retrieving ERI Data Using FOCUS

The criteria for processing ERI data using FOCUS is as follows:

- The FOCUS element name is ASD-SAL-USE2.

  Note: Access to ERI data depends on an individual's access authority and may not be accessible to all FOCUS users.

  This multi-use field is used for temporary storage of element(s) pending the next database change.

Criteria for Querying ERI Data Using IRIS

The criteria for processing ERI data using IRIS is as follows:

- The ERI data element is a 6-position field located in IRIS Program IR301, Handicap/RNO Data.

- The ERI codes **Y** (Yes) or **N** (No) are used to reflect the racial category or categories with which an employee is closely identified. Each ERI category designation is displayed.

  Note: Access to ERI data depends on an individual's access authority and may not be accessible to all IRIS users.

  This multi-use field is used for temporary storage of element(s) pending the next database change.

The EPIC, FESI, and IRIS procedures, which are available online at the NFC Web site, will be updated to include the information in this bulletin. To view and/or print these procedures, go to the NFC Home Page (*www.nfc.usda.gov*) and click the **Pubs & Forms** icon. At the Pubs & Forms page left-hand menu, click List by Title/Chapter then search for the applicable procedure on the list provided.

For questions about NFC processing, contact the Payroll/Personnel Call Center at **504-255-4630.**

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